

## Universal School Meals Program Act of 2023: List of Endorsing Organizations

- American Heart Association
- Hunger Free America
- Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior
- National Family Farm Coalition
- Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN)
- Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) – *“The Universal School Meals Act would be a game changer for children, families, schools, and communities,” said Luis Guardia, president of Food Research & Action Center. “By offering school meals to all students at no charge and expanding access to meals during the summer, after school, and at child care, we can ensure that all children have the nutrition they need to learn and thrive. We urge Congress to enact this important legislation.”*
- National Association of Social Workers
- School Nutrition Association
- MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
- Child Development Council – *“Consistent access to nutritional foods is critical to growing brains and bodies. No child should be denied nourishment because of financial barriers.”*
- National Education Association – *“No child should have to learn on an empty belly. Food insecurity can be found in every community — urban, suburban, and rural — and this crisis is particularly exacerbated in our Black, brown and Indigenous communities. Since the USDA universal school meals waivers ended, educators across the country have witnessed an alarming rise in students going hungry,” said NEA President Becky Pringle. “The National Education Association applauds Senators Sanders, Gillibrand and Heinrich, and Representatives Omar, McGovern and Moore for their leadership in introducing the Universal School Meals Program Act. Congress can take a big step towards fixing this crisis by passing free healthy school meals for all children so they have the resources they need to grow and thrive.”*
- Vermont Farm to School, Inc.
- Jewish Family and Children’s Services of Minneapolis
- New York State School Boards Association

- Hunger Free Vermont – *“Eliminating child hunger and making sure every student can focus and learn in school and childcare ought to be one of our top national priorities. Hunger Free Vermont celebrates the reintroduction of the Universal School Meals Bill, and urges its swift passage.”*
- CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute – *“The Universal School Meals Program Act is a crucial step towards ensuring that no child goes hungry in the richest country in the world. This bill provides free breakfast, lunch, and dinner to every student without requiring application paperwork, thus eliminating the burden of stigma. The act also benefits students, families, teachers, and schools by improving academic performance, attendance rates, health outcomes, and reducing financial stress and suspension rates. By building off the success of the temporary pandemic model, this bill offers a permanent solution to address the issue of child hunger. Let us join together in endorsing the Universal School Meals Program Act to ensure that every child has access to nutritious meals.”*
- Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
- California Association of Food Banks
- Food Bank for New York City – *“At a time when families with children make up two-thirds of visitors to our network of food pantries and soup kitchens, it is essential that we ensure all of our kids have the meals they need to learn and grow,” said Leslie Gordon, President and CEO of Food Bank For New York City. “Universal School Meals is a powerful and commonsense way to prevent hunger and invest in our future.”*
- Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance
- Hunger Solutions New York – *“Providing universal school meals reduces hunger, supports learning, bolsters students’ mental and physical health, and supports families who are struggling to make ends meet. It also eliminates pervasive barriers to access and participation in school meal programs, including stigma, burdensome paperwork, and school meal debt. We thank Senator Gillibrand for sponsoring this critical legislation, which will ensure all children have access to the healthy meals they need in school, over the summer break, and in childcare and afterschool programs.” - Andrés Vives, Executive Director, Hunger Solutions New York*
- Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee
- Church Women United in New York State
- Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont – *“Universal school meals, combined with an incentive for locally grown and produced food, is one of the most effective and equitable tools we have to support families, schools, and small and medium sized farms as they continue to recover from the pandemic and deal with historic levels of inflation. This program is a win for kids, for schools, and for rural economies.”*
- Feeding New York State

- Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force – *“All children deserve to eat, regardless of their school meal account balance. To be well read, children must be well fed.”*
- City Harvest
- GRACE/End Child Poverty California
- New Hampshire Hunger Solutions
- Saranac Lake CSD
- Los Angeles Regional Food Bank
- West Islip Union Free School District
- Arlington Area Childcare Inc.
- Red Hook CSD
- Capstone Community Action
- Wisconsin Education Association Council
- Northwest Harvest
- Center for Biological Diversity – *“Ensuring school meals for all is a health and justice issue and it’s an environmental issue too,” said Jennifer Molidor, senior food campaigner at the Center for Biological Diversity. “When every student has access to free, healthy food it combats stigma, supports learning and heals the environment.”*
- Green Mountain United Way
- BMH/CHT Health Coach
- MUCH
- Farmingdale UFSD
- Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin
- Union County Schools
- Shelburne Farms – *“Nourishing students well means they can learn well.”*
- East End Food Institute
- Feeding Texas

- Hart County Charter School – *“Our students should never worry about having enough money to eat. We feed our prisoners without expecting their families to pay...our students should be our priority.”*
- Jackson County School
- Teens for Food Justice
- Nebraska Appleseed
- Fruit Belt Advisory Council – *“Empty bellies have no ears.”*
- African Heritage Food Co-Op – *“No child deserves to be hungry.”*
- NH Hunger Solutions
- Our Community Cares Camp, Inc. – *“As an SFSP (Summer Food Service Provider) site, I fully endorse and believe it is essential for all children to have free universal access to breakfast and lunch. My camp provides FREE meals and a FREE camp to the neediest children in our school district during the summer. I have worked as a para-professional for 18 years in the public school system. I have seen the shaming, embarrassment, and loss of dignity of children/students. For example, high school students were refused when they wanted breakfast or lunch because they had an outstanding balance. Elementary school students state, ‘Oh, they are one of the meal kids.’ If we believe that all children should get what they need when they go to school, that should also include meals.”*
- University District Food Bank
- Shriver Center on Poverty Law
- Hawaii Children’s Action Network Speaks!
- Hall County Nutrition
- Hall County School Nutrition – *“ALL students should eat free if they attend school. If we collect all of the resources SNPs utilize to find out who can afford to pay for meal, we could be using those funds to feed kids. We send billions of taxpayer dollars to foreign countries each year, and it’s shameful that we don’t feed our own children. We need to do better, and FEED OUR KIDS!; School nutrition programs are in a dire situation with increasing food costs, increasing labor costs (due to rising insurance costs), and a decline in participation due to the return of paid school meals. Families are currently shouldering increased food costs in grocery stores. The return of meals at no cost at schools would be a lifeline to families and school nutrition programs. Please consider supporting this very important initiative.” - Sara Sheridan*
- Hall County School – *“Feed our Future and watch them Grow!”*

- Hall County School District
- Hall County BOE
- Forsyth Co. Food Service
- Salamanca City Central School District – *“Many student rely on school meals for their nourishment. The more easily they are obtained, the more these students are ready to learn.”*
- Stillwater Central Schools
- Catholic Academy of Niagara Falls
- St. Peter’s School
- Middlebury Natural Foods Co-Op
- Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon
- Food Bank of Central New York
- San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition – *“This is important legislation to keep our children well fed and prevent the stigma impact from have and have not approaches. It also supports our Colorado Farmers - which is very important to our local communities, economies and environment. Thank you.”*
- Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition – *“One of our coalition steering committee members is in nutrition services. Amy commented, “I spend about 30-60 minutes a day chasing down and notifying families whose students need lunch money - sometimes to no avail - which leads to undue stress for our older students who are more likely to know their meal account balances. When all students ate for free, we were able to free up our administrative labor to focus on more pertinent program-related tasks including procurement of local foods, recipe development, and collaboration with students. The stigma in the cafeteria was also gone which helps students feel more relaxed and less anxious about this adult-centered problem.”*
- Soul Fire Farm Institute
- Second Harvest of Silicon Valley
- Cumberland County Food Security Council
- Kona Kids Foundation – *“Our kids are worth it.”*
- Ballard Food Bank
- Worcester County Food Bank – *“Childhood hunger is a solvable problem and an issue of social justice. Universal School Meals are an essential resource in this effort.”*

- Project Bread
- Guilford Public Schools – *A "measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children and to encourage domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities" as stated and created by Harry S. Truman in 1946.*
- San Francisco Marin Food Bank
- Community Food Advocates – *"Universal free school meals is an idea whose time has come. Removing decades long policy that has separated children by income in the cafeteria must be a national priority. We know free school meals for all works to reducing hunger, improve health and ensure children have the nutrition needed to thrive in school."*
- Food Bank of Northern Nevada
- Jamestown Public Schools – *"Will the Democrats and Republicans stop fighting and just pass this bill. Universal Free Meals - All kids, everywhere, every day!"*
- Chef Ann Foundation
- ScratchWorks
- Chicago Food Policy Action Council
- Food Bank of the Southern Tier
- Saratoga Immigration Coalition